

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE TORRANCE COMMISSION ON AGING

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order on November 9, 2010 at 9:30 a.m. in the Hosler Conference Room at the Bartlett Senior Citizen Center.

ROLL CALL/MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE

Present: Commissioners Cardella, Craft, Draper, Kraemer, Robelotto, Virobik and Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino

Absent: None

Staff: Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand

FLAG SALUTE

Commissioner Cardella led the Pledge of Allegiance.

INSPIRATIONAL

Commissioner Cardella provided the following inspiration:

There is only one person who could ever make you happy and that person is you.
David Burns

Former Commissioner Griffith provided the following inspirations:

Truth is not determined by the volume of the voice.
Chinese proverb

The greatest test of courage on earth is to bear defeat without losing heart.
Robert G. Igersoll

Power does not corrupt. Fear corrupts.... perhaps the fear of a loss of power.
John Steinbeck

ACCEPT AND FILE AFFIDAVIT OF AGENDA POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner Virobik moved and Commissioner Kraemer seconded, to accept and file the Affidavit of Agenda Posting for its meeting of November 9, 2010. The motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Virobik stated that on page 3, paragraph 9, of the minutes of October 12, 2010, the sentence should read: "Commissioner Virobik noted that most of the veteran's assistance programs did charge a fee for their services and added that she would bring information to the next meeting detailing a free veterans program." She added that the sentence should be under the Health section, not Housing.

MOTION: Commissioner Robelotto moved and Commissioner Kraemer seconded, to approve the minutes of the Commission on Aging meeting of October 12, 2010, as amended. The motion carried.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Former Commissioner Griffith

Cara Rice, Former Carson Transportation Manager

SENIOR CITIZENS CONCERNS

A. City Council Activities

Commissioner Kraemer's reported that the City Council had spent a great deal of time on the moratorium for massage/acupuncture businesses. She stated that City Council had approved a 10 month, 15 days moratorium on new businesses and 4 classes of exemptions. She noted that it was difficult to legally close existing businesses.

Commissioner Kraemer stated that a \$5.5 million shortfall in the budget was projected and to deal with the shortfall, the City was eliminating open positions in the City. She stated that there had been no layoffs, but they were not filling vacant positions.

Commissioner Kraemer reported that the North Torrance Library was going to be remodeled and grant funding had been transferred to allow the Civic Center Library to remain open on Sundays.

Commissioner Kraemer reported that the Police Department now had a crime activity map on their website.

In response to a question from Commissioner Virobik, Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand stated that the construction work in the front of City Hall was remodeling of the east end of City Hall, including the one stop permit center.

B. Housing

Commissioner Cardella announced that Redondo Beach low income senior home owners had access to a free program called Handyperson, which did small home projects for free. Commissioner Virobik stated that Torrance had a similar program called the Torrance Home Improvement Program.

In response to a question from Commissioner Robelotto, Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand suggested that when the Commission had a proposed plan for shared housing that the Commission submit the proposal as an information item to the Council for their consideration and response.

Commissioner Robelotto stated that it might be possible to set up a non-profit 501 (c) for the shared housing program for Torrance residents.

PRESENTATION ON SECTION 8 RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, SENIOR MOBILE HOME SUBSIDY PROGRAM AND SENIOR SAFRAN BUILDINGS SUBSIDY PROGRAM

Housing Administrator Richardson distributed information on various housing programs in Torrance, including Section 8, Senior Subsidy and Senior Mobile Home Subsidy along with information on income limits for the housing assistance payment program and Section 8 waiting list categories.

Housing Administrator Richardson explained that Section 8 was the main program in Torrance for seniors, disabled and families. She stated that Torrance had a total of 690 vouchers, but were currently only using between 610-620 vouchers and 100% of available funds. She noted that the City still did not have their Section 8 budget from the Federal government but were anticipating a slight increase from last year.

Housing Administrator Richardson noted that the Section 8 waiting list was now closed, but when it was open for a one month period last year, they received over 18,000 applications, with 7% from Torrance residents.

In response to a question from Commissioner Craft, Housing Administrator Richardson stated that they had advertised the open waiting list in: the Daily Breeze, senior centers, RSVP, the Social Security Office, Harbor Regional Center and senior apartments. She added that the office was required to take all applications, but they had never been able to accept anyone beyond waiting list category 4.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Virobik, Housing Administrator Richardson stated that the Senior Subsidy program was only for seniors but that Section 8 Housing was for all ages, including seniors.

Housing Administrator Richardson stated that Section 8 was a tenant based program, in that the tenant holds the voucher and must find a unit that will work with the program. She stated that there was no designated exclusively Section 8 project housing in Torrance but that, currently, voucher holders were able to find units up to 90% of the time.

Housing Administrator Richardson noted that the voucher was held by the tenant, but that the subsidies were paid directly to the landlord. She explained that people either working or living in Torrance were in the same category, but that a person working, but not living in Torrance, receiving a voucher, would need to remain in Torrance for at least a year, before being able to transfer the voucher to another agency.

Housing Administrator Richardson noted that the rental cost for a one bedroom apartment at Coleman Court was \$1005 and \$1015 at Ocean Terrace.

Assistant Housing Administrator Barclay presented information for the Senior Subsidy, funded by the Redevelopment Housing Set Aside Money, which had a possible 20 to 25 positions available to tenants of Coleman Court and Ocean Terrace with a maximum subsidy of \$250 per month.

In a response to questions from Commissioner Virobik, Housing Administrator Richardson stated that there were other buildings in Torrance that had their own subsidies, or buildings such as Harmony Court which worked with Section 8, but was built with state tax credits and had to keep their rents at a certain level. She noted that the property that Harmony Court, Coleman Court and Ocean Terrace were built on was still owned by the Torrance Unified School District and on 50 year leases.

Responding to a question from Former Commissioner Griffith, Housing Administrator Richardson stated that there were no property restrictions on smoking and that it was up to the management of the building, as the buildings were privately owned.

Housing Administrator Richardson stated that the minimum age for seniors was 62 for all of the senior subsidy programs, which was the federal guideline.

Housing Administrator Richardson presented information on the Senior Mobile Home Subsidy which was available to seniors owning mobile homes in Torrance. She stated that the subsidy was \$100 per month and that the City was currently paying approximately 50 subsidies. She added that the subsidy was usually paid to the mobile home park, unless the park chose not to participate in the program and then the subsidy was paid directly to the mobile home owner.

Housing Administrator Richardson stated that the parks that participated in the program Torrance were: South Bay Mobile Home Park, Del Amo Gardens and Torrance Home Park. She noted that the Skyline Park did not participate, but that the mobile home owners at Skyline Park, if qualified, could have the subsidy paid directly to them.

In response to a question from Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino, Housing Administrator Richardson stated that the park owners were restricted from charging higher rents to those who were receiving a subsidy. She explained that the income limit for a mobile home subsidy was low income, as defined on the 2010 income limits summary and that the income would include social security.

Housing Administrator Richardson stated that the Mobile Home subsidy was funded for a two year term, which would expire next year. She stated that she believed that the Council would renew the program, as the program had not used all of its funding.

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino thanked Housing Administrator Richardson and Assistant Housing Administrator Barclay for their update on the housing assistance programs in the City.

Commissioner Virobik thanked Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino and Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand for inviting Housing Administrator Richardson to the Commission meeting to explain the different subsidy programs. Commissioner Virobik stated that she had learned new information that she would be able to take back and use at Focal Point.

C. Health

Commissioner Virobik distributed an article on Affordable Care Act for seniors from H.E.L.P. newsletter and the contact information for the San Pedro Service Center, which provided assistance with Veterans benefits at no charge.

Commissioner Cardella reported that there was conflicting information on whether seniors over 64 should receive a whooping cough vaccine.

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino announced that the clinic on November 15 at the Ken Miller Recreation Center from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. would have flu shots only, but that the clinic on November 10 at Wilson Park from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. would include free seasonal flu shots as well as free shots for pneumonia and whooping cough.

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand noted that the clinic on November 10 was also a disaster exercise, to test the response in the case of a disaster, while the clinic on November 15 was the seasonal flu shot, for all ages.

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino reported that Torrance Memorial Hospital would conduct a disaster drill on November 18.

D. Transportation

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino announced that the official groundbreaking for the Del Amo Boulevard extension would take place at 4:30 p.m., November 9.

Cara Rice, Former Carson Transportation Manager encouraged seniors to take the bus as well as the Metro Red, Blue and Green lines.

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino announced that the Torrance buses were redoing maps and routes and that the new material would be available soon in the libraries.

E. Community Programs

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand reported that the Senior Citizens Holiday Arts and Crafts Sale would be on November 20 at the Ken Miller Recreation Center from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand announced that the sign up date for the next Torrance Travelers Tours would be on December 4.

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino noted that Senior Holiday Luncheon would be on December 17 at the Ken Miller Recreation Center and that tickets were on sale at the Bartlett Center for \$10.

Commissioner Cardella announced that on Thursday, December 2, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., the Holiday Festival at Torrance Memorial Medical Center would be free to seniors.

F. Focal Point Program

Commissioner Virobik reported the following Focal Point statistics for the month of:

October 2010

Total number of documented calls: 48	Total number of callbacks: 52
Miscellaneous calls: 82	Total number of walk-ins: 18
Total number of calls received: 130	

Of the documented calls:

15% were in regard to in home services	40% were for housing
31.2 % were for transportation	

Commissioner Virobik also reported that Focal Point participated in 2 health fairs, conducted 3 community presentations and added 2, possibly 3 volunteers to the staff.

Commissioner Virobik announced that Julia Rosenberg would be at the November 19 Focal point meeting to speak on senior legislative issues at the state level.

G. Elder Abuse/Fraud

Commissioner Craft stated that several South Bay residents had been tricked into sending money in an email scam in which someone pretends to be a relative and asks for money.

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino announced that there would be a presentation in the series, "Seniors, Don't be Scammed", called Street Scams and Pigeon Drops on November 16 at 10:00 a.m. at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library.

Commissioner Draper stated that only non profits were allowed to solicit in Torrance and they were required to have a license, so it was recommended that you ask solicitors to show their license. Commissioner Draper also added that one should not allow solicitors into the house or allow oneself to become distracted, if the solicitor was in or on the property.

ORALS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand noted that the City Clerk had extended the terms of appointed officials to January 31 of each year and that new appointments would be made and effective February 2011.

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand reported that AB1234 Ethics training class would be held when a date was announced by the City Attorney's office. Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand stated that the training could be completed online.

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino reminded the Commission that there would be no meeting in December.

Commissioner Robelotto noted that she would not be able to attend the January 11, 2011 meeting.

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino reminded the Commission to begin reviewing possible candidates to nominate for the Older Americans Award.

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand noted that the nominees needed to be Torrance residents, and for the City award needed to be 50 years or older, while the nominees for the Los Angeles County award needed to be 65 years or older.

Commissioner Kraemer announced that the Drum Barracks would have a Christmas program on December 4 and 5, in conjunction with the Banning House.

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino wished everyone happy holidays.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m. to the regular meeting on Tuesday, January 11, 2011 at 9:30 a.m. in the Hosler Conference Room at the Bartlett Senior Citizens Center.

Approved as Submitted January 11, 2011 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
